

# Maurice Hinchey NEWS

## 26<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT, NEW YORK

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### HINCHEY JOINS IN UNVEILING OF TCAT TROLLEY

ITHACA - U.S. Representative Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) today spoke at the unveiling of the Tompkins Consolidated Area Transit (TCAT) trolley bus, a 35-foot natural gas-powered historic theme replica is designed to be environmentally friendly and to promote increased use of public transportation. Federal funds secured by Hinchey were used to purchase the trolley.

"It's gratifying to see TCAT's wonderful plans becoming a reality," said Hinchey. "This trolley will make public transportation more appealing, more convenient, and better for the environment. In addition to the benefits reaped from reduced emissions, the trolley will keep more vehicles off the road by making public transportation a more attractive alternative."

The trolley bus mimics the trolley cars of yesteryear and will run in a continuous loop between downtown Ithaca and the Cornell University campus. Eventually, it will serve other TCAT routes and will include tours of local historic sites. It is intended primarily to encourage Ithaca's tourists to take advantage of public transportation. It will also increase the visibility and appeal of TCAT's services to local residents. The trolley bus is one component of a larger initiative by TCAT to upgrade its technology and make its vehicles friendlier to the environment.

Hinchey has secured \$4.25 million for TCAT in the last three years for the bus improvement project and the construction of a downtown intermodal transportation hub. Details of the funding are attached.

## **Congressman Hinchey Secures \$4.25 million for TCAT Projects**

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Congressman Hinchey has secured \$4.25 million for Tompkins Consolidated Area Transit (TCAT) in the last three years for two major projects, the bus improvement project and the proposed downtown intermodal transportation hub.

TCAT's bus improvement project included the purchase of the 35-foot historic theme natural gas-powered replica trolley bus, the purchase of two 40-foot hybrid buses and six 40-foot low floor replacement diesel buses.

The proposed intermodal transportation hub would consolidate TCAT's services in downtown Ithaca with interstate bus lines and other ground transportation facilities, increasing economic activity in the city's central business district and reducing automobile congestion.

### **Funding Highlights**

- May 1998** Congressman Hinchey successfully sought a provision in the Transportation Equity Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (TEA-21), five-year federal highway authorization bill, which authorized \$2.5 million for TCAT's bus improvement project.
- Sept. 1998** The Fiscal Year 1999 Transportation Appropriations bill provided \$1.25 million in first-year funding for TCAT's bus improvement project at Hinchey's request and as authorized by TEA-21.
- Nov. 1999** Hinchey secured \$2.37 million in earmarks for TCAT in the Fiscal Year 2000 Transportation Appropriations bill, including \$1.125 million for TCAT's proposed downtown intermodal hub and \$1.25 million in second-year funding for the bus improvement project, as authorized by TEA-21.
- Oct. 2000** At Hinchey's request, the Fiscal Year 2001 Transportation Appropriations bill included a \$625,000 earmark for TCAT's proposed central transit center.